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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - JUNE 17

REF: KINSHASA 562

¶1. (U) The information contained in this cable consists principally of spot reports from various sources. This cable is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

#### North Kivu Security Situation

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¶2. (SBU) Unknown men attacked the MONUC company operating base at Pinga on the night of June 15, and a MONUC interpreter is currently missing. The FDLR is active in the region and has previously threatened Pinga. PARECO also has a sizable presence in the area. FARDC troops in the region, furious about non-payment of salaries for many months, have also openly threatened to loot in the area.

¶3. (SBU) APCLS troops who expressed a desire to integrate (reftel) have been relocated by MONUC to Mutera. Mutera is not an official integration center, but it has facilities to accommodate combatants while they are processed into the FARDC.

¶4. (SBU) Further details have emerged about the citizen protest north of Rutshuru (reftel). Approximately 1,500 locals, mostly from Kanyabayonga, have blocked the road from Rutshuru to Ishasha to protest three civilian killings by FARDC troops, at one point placing the bodies in the road to block traffic.

¶5. (U) Radio Okapi reported that a FARDC major and one escort were killed during an exchange of fire with FDLR elements near Kiwanja on June 16. One FDLR was killed in the exchange, according to the report, and the police in area have been reinforced amid concerns of heightened threats from armed groups.

#### South Kivu Security Situation

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¶6. (SBU) The FARDC clashed with the FDLR one kilometer from Mwenga on June 15. The encounter may have been an accident, as it appears that the two patrols bumped into each other and exchanged intense gunfire. The FDLR fled and there were no casualties.

¶7. (SBU) MONUC staged a raid on a suspected arms cache in Uvira on June 14, but discovered only two empty rooms. MONUC included Uvira-based units of the national police (PNC) in the planning for the raid and believes the PNC may have tipped off the owners. On June 15, they raided another nearby house, informing the PNC only at the last moment, and seized 139 AK-47s, six Uzis, five rockets and stores of ammunition.

#### Open Borders

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¶8. (U) MONUC Goma reported that the Ugandan press announced June 15 that border posts between Rwanda, DRC and Uganda would be open 24

hours a day beginning September 1. DRC border posts in the east are now open from 6:00 to 18:00, although pedestrian traffic is allowed after the border closes to vehicles.

Getting the FRF on-side

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¶9. (SBU) On June 15, chief negotiator Father Apollinaire Malu Malu met with FRF political and military leaders in a cordial but frank session, attempting to persuade the rebel group to integrate. A western diplomat who participated in the meeting told us that Malu Malu strongly urged the FRF to sign the March 23 agreement on disarmament of armed groups. He also offered the group two seats on the National Monitoring Committee, as well as a commune in South Kivu in return for its participation. He said that the FRF's demand to create a territory on the Haut-Plateau was a non-starter. (Note: A commune is a sub-provincial administrative unit that comprises at least 20,000 persons in a prescribed location. Under the proposed decentralization framework, communes will directly elect their local government. Although a territory has more status, its leadership is appointed. End note.) Malu Malu apparently warned the group that the GDRC's patience was finite and that this was the GDRC's final offer. At the end of June, the period for integration of armed groups in South Kivu will come to a close, and armed men will then be treated as bandits.

¶10. (SBU) Comment: Many times in the past the FRF was believed to be on the verge of joining the integration process. Despite these false starts, there are several reasons to be more optimistic that this time, the FRF will participate. First, the proposal to create a commune has never been broached previously. Second, Malu Malu, by

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all accounts, was much firmer than ever before. Third, the integration process is underway and South Kivu armed groups are participating on the National Monitoring Committee. The oft-cited threat that the FRF will be left behind has more and more credibility. Finally, against the backdrop of Kimia II, the FRF must be uncertain about FARDC/MONUC operations in South Kivu. End comment.)

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